

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2996

DEPT PASS HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, ET  
SUBJ: SEPT 12 CELEBRATION FOR FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
REVOLUTION: EXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUMMARY: WE HAVE MANY INDICATIONS THAT THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION ON SEPT 12 WILL BE A MAJOR MILESTONE. ANNOUNCEMENT OF STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE PMAC AND PMGSE EXPECTED ARE THE ELEVATION OF PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU TO THE PRESIDENCY OF BOTH THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT AND TO THAT OF A NEW SINGLE NATION-WIDE POLITICAL PARTY. INVITATIONS TO THE CELEBRATION HAVE BEEN SENT TO AFRICAN AND COMMUNIST STATES AND SELECTED OTHERS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE FIRST OF TWO MAJOR STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE PRESENT PROVISIONAL GOVERNING ARRANGEMENTS OF ETHIOPIA WHICH ARE EXPECTED TO BE ANNOUNCED IN SEPT ARE THE ELEVATION OF PROVISIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (PMAC OR DIRG) CHAIRMAN MENGISTU TO THE PRESIDENCY OF ETHIOPIA. THE PRESIDENCY WOULD INCLUDE THE FUNCTION OF A PRIME MINISTER AS WELL. AT THAT STAGE, IT IS LIKELY THAT THE PROVISIONAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF SOCIALIST ETHIOPIA (PMGSE) WILL BE RENAMED TO REFLECT THAT  
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IT IS NO LONGER "PROVISIONAL" OR "MILITARY." THE GOVERNMENT'S NAME IS MOST APT TO CONTAIN "PEOPLE'S," "DEMOCRATIC" AND "SOCIALIST." THE TITLE CHANGE FOR MENGISTU WOULD BE JUST THAT AS HE IS ALREADY CHIEF OF STATE. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGE WOULD BE TO SHOW THAT HIS RULE HAS BEEN INSTITUTIONALIZED AND THAT THE DUAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNING ETHIOPIA (GOVERN-

MENT MINISTERS RECEIVING POLICY GUIDANCE FROM DIRG MILITARY OFFICERS) WAS BEING CLARIFIED. MENGISTU'S POWER WOULD BE ENHANCED AND A SEMBLANCE OF STABILITY IMPOSED. THE MILITARY WOULD STILL BE IN CONTROL.

2. THE SECOND MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT EXPECTED IS THE FORMATION OF A MASS PARTY BUILT ALONG THE LINES OF COMMUNIST PARTIES IN EASTERN EUROPE. MENGISTU WOULD BECOME THE HEAD OF THIS PARTY, WHICH WOULD BE COMPOSED OF HIS OWN SEDED (REVOLUTIONARY FLAME), THE FOUR OTHER MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES WHICH ARE PRESENTLY TOLERATED TO A GREATER OR LESSER EXTENT BY THE PMACE, AND VARIOUS MASS ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE ALL ETHIOPIAN PEASANTS ASSOCIATION, THE ALL ETHIOPIAN TRADE UNION AND URBAN ASSOCIATIONS. THE MERGER OF THE EXISTING PARTY ORGANIZATIONS INTO ONE PARTY UNDER MENGISTU'S PERSONAL CONTROL, REINFORCED BY THE LEADING ROLE WHICH WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE SEDED, WOULD SERVE TO LIMIT FURTHER POTENTIAL OPPOSITION TO MENGISTU. ADDITION OF THE MASS ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH ARE UNDER MENGISTU'S CONTROL, WOULD PROVIDE A LARGE, NATION-WIDE MEMBERSHIP, ORGANIZED CROWDS WHICH COULD BE TURNED OUT ON COMMAND, AND A COUNTER-BALANCE TO ANY INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY THE FOUR MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES MIGHT CONSIDER. SUCH A PARTY ORGANIZATION WOULD ALSO PROVIDE MENGISTU

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WITH AN ARGUMENT THAT HE HAD MET THE SOVIET AND CUBAN DEMAND FOR A SINGLE, CIVILIAN MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, WITHOUT IN FACT RELINQUISHING HIS DE FACTO MILITARY CONTROL TO CIVILIANS. WHILE THIS MOVE MIGHT NOT BE ENTIRELY TO THE LIKING OF THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS, AS THEIR ACCESS AND DIRECT INFLUENCE MIGHT NOT BE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED, THEY WOULD HAVE LITTLE LEVERAGE FOR BLOCKING IT OR OVERT REASON FOR CRITICISM. MENGISTU IS IN NO POSITION NOW OR IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE TO DISPENSE WITH THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS, BUT THEY IN TURN HAVE LITTLE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE MOMENT OTHER THAN TO CONTINUE THEIR SUPPORT OF HIM.

3. THE PMGSE IS PLANNING A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION FOR THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REVOLUTION IN ORDER TO LAUNCH ITS NEW INSTITUTIONS. ALL AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE INCLUDING EGYPT, BUT SUDAN POSSIBLY AND SOMALIA CERTAINLY EXCEPTED, HAVE BEEN INVITED. THE INVITATIONS MADE CLEAR THAT LOWER-LEVEL SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES WOULD BE ACCEPTED. ALL COMMUNIST STATES HAVE BEEN ASKED TO

SEND A DELEGATION AND THERE IS MUCH SPECULATION THAT FIDEL CASTRO WILL COME IN PERSON. AMONG OTHERS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN INVITED ARE BOTH YEMENS AND INDIA ( THE LATTER WAS SPECIFICALLY ASKED TO SEND A MINISTERIAL OR SUB-MINISTERIAL DELEGATION.)

4. THERE IS A SPECULATIVE ELEMENT TO THE SCENARIO OUTLINED IN PARAS 1 AND 2 ABOVE. THERE ARE STILL OVER 2 MONTHS BEFORE THE SEPT 12 ANNIVERSARY AND MUCH CAN HAPPEN TO THE PMGSE BEFORE THEN. MOST PROBABLY VARIABLES INCLUDE FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN ERITREA AND THE OGADEN, PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM THE OBVIOUSLY DECLINING ECONOMIC SITUATION AND THE ALWAYS PRESENT POSSIBILITY OF

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ANOTHER FALLING OUT WITHIN THE DIRG. HOWEVER, ASSUMING NO MAJOR UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT, WE BELIEVE THIS SERIES OF EVENTS WILL COME TO PASS.

MATHERON

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED TO HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE.

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## Message Attributes

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